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[TFR 446-1]

[Handwritten]—27—

[Handwritten] Declassified
Reason: Act of the Navy General Staff
Entry 202 of 5.10.93
Director of Archive (signed)
~~Top Secret~~
Copy No. 2

[Handwritten note]
To: Yumashev I. S.
Agreed. Report in the Central Committee to Comrade Stalin that you began these operations.
20 April 1950 Bulganin. Sp. entry 2231

TO: Main Department of the General Staff
Present detailed plan for performing this mission
Yumashev

To Comrade BULGANIN, N.A.

I would like to report the following:

After the destruction of U.S. B-29 airplane (or "Privateer," according to information in the foreign press)[1] on 8 April, the Americans undertook active measures to search for the airplane and have conducted search operations in the Baltic Sea in the area between the islands of Gotland and Bornholm. The search for this plane over the course of several days with the use of a large number of aircraft gives good reason to believe the lost plane was of special value to the Americans. It cannot be ruled out that there were important classified documents on board the plane as well as valuable classified equipment.

In view of the above, I believe it would be advisable to carry out a search for the sunken American airplane and to raise it for the purpose of removing documents and classified equipment, if any are found.

The approximate coordinates of the B-29's crash site were established by a fighter plane of Navy Fleet 4. The pilot of this plane, Commander of the 223rd Fighter Air Regiment Lieutenant Colonel Filanovich, observed a large oil slick in the area of the crash site two hours after the plane went down at latitude 56° 30' 0 and longitude 20° 28' 0, as well as an unidentified floating object three miles to the north of the slick. It may be assumed the oil slick indicates where the American plane went down.

Search operations for the downed airplane will be carried out simultaneously by divers from two diver stations in the most likely area of the crash, where the oil slick and the unidentified object were observed, at a depth of 50 to 65 meters.

[1] The Soviets initially thought the airplane was a B-29, and it was referred to it as such throughout Soviet Government reporting and in the Soviet press. It was in actuality a U.S. Navy PB4Y2 "Privateer."

Reviewed by DPMO
IAW 50 USC 435 Note &DOD 5400.7-R
Date:24-Jan-2002 Initialed By: B. W.

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Reason: Act of Navy General Staff
Entry 202 of 5.10.93
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If the diving operations fail to yield results, sweeping with bottom trawlers and searching with a metal detector will be conducted in the presumed area of the plane crash, which encompasses a total area of 130 square miles as shown on the diagram.

Navy Fleet 4 will provide four trawler vessels to conduct trawling operations.

If the sunken plane is located, it will be inspected in place for the purpose of removing documents and valuable equipment, which would be brought up to the surface of the water. The plane itself would be raised subsequently.

The approximate duration of the trawling operation will be one month.

Attachments: 1. Diagram of region of plane crash and search on one page, drawing no. 163, attached only to copy no. 1.
2. General map of Baltic Sea no. 1569, attached only to copy no. 1.

(signed)
YUMASHEV
[Handwritten] Certified: (signed)

20 April 1950
No. 1274828

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Entry 202 of 5.10.93
Director of Archive (signed)
~~Top Secret~~
Copy No. 2

To Comrade STALIN

[Handwritten] *I would like to report the following:*

After the destruction of U.S. B-29 airplane (or "Privateer," according to information in the foreign press)[2] on 8 April, the Americans undertook active measures to search for the airplane and have conducted search operations in the Baltic Sea in the area between the islands of Gotland and Bornholm. The search for this plane over the course of several days with the use of a large number of aircraft gives good reason to believe the lost plane was of special value to the Americans. It cannot be ruled out that there were important classified documents on board the plane as well as valuable classified equipment.

In view of the above, ~~I believe it would be advisable~~ to carry out a search for the sunken American airplane and to raise it for the purpose of removing documents and classified equipment, if any are found.

The approximate coordinates of the B-29's crash site were established by a fighter plane of Navy Fleet 4. The pilot of this plane, Commander of the 223rd Fighter Air Regiment Lieutenant Colonel Filanovich, observed a large oil slick in the area of the crash site two hours after the plane went down at latitude 56° 30' 0 and longitude 20° 28' 0, as well as an unidentified floating object three miles to the north of the slick. It may be assumed the oil slick indicates where the American plane went down.

Search operations for the downed airplane ~~will be carried out~~ simultaneously by divers from two diver stations in the most likely area of the crash, where the oil slick and the unidentified object were observed, at a depth of 50 to 65 meters.

[2] The Soviets initially thought the airplane was a B-29, and it was referred to it as such throughout Soviet Government reporting and in the Soviet press. It was in actuality a U.S. Navy PB4Y2 "Privateer."—Translator

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Reason: Act of Navy General Staff
Entry 202 of 5.10.93
Director of the Archive (signed)

If the diving operations fail to yield results, sweeping with bottom trawlers and searching with a metal detector will be conducted in the presumed area of the plane crash, which encompasses a total area of 130 square miles as shown on the diagram.

Navy Fleet 4 will provide four trawler vessels to conduct trawling operations.

If the sunken plane is located, it will be inspected in place for the purpose of removing documents and valuable equipment, which would be brought up to the surface of the water. The plane itself would be raised subsequently.

The approximate duration of the trawling operation will be one month.

The order to conduct a search for the sunken airplane has been issued to the commander of Navy Fleet 4.

Attachments: 1. Diagram of region of plane crash and search. *[*Handwritten] *Drawing No. 164 GOU [Main Operations Directorate]*
2. General Map of Baltic Sea. [Handwritten] *Drawing No. 165 GOU*
[Handwritten] *Total of two maps only to Addressee.*
Certified: [*signed*)]

(signed)
YUMASHEV
[Handwritten] Certified: (signed)

20 April 1950

No. 1274831

CHIEF OF THE MAIN OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT OF NAVY GENERAL STAFF
VICE ADMIRAL (name not visible)

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[TFR 446-5]
Copy No. 3

To Comrade STALIN
To Comrade BULGANIN, N.A.

I would like to report on the measures that have been taken to search for the downed American airplane in the Liepaya region as of 16:00 on 22 April of this year.

1. At 8:00 on 22 April, two diving stations (16 divers) began to survey the sea floor in the region of the presumed plane crash in the places where an oil slick and an unidentified floating object were observed.

2. Hydrographic equipment operations (placement of buoys and markers) have been carried out in the search area by the hydrographic vessel "Rulevoy" for subsequent trawling by bottom trawlers.

3. Nine trawlers are ready to set off from Liepaya to trawl the area and 13 trawlers are on the way from Baltiysk to Liepaya.

In addition to the two diving stations that are operating in the search area, a "Ruslan" rescue vessel, two diving stations from Baltiysk and 15 deep-water divers have arrived in Liepaya from Riga.

A total of 68 divers, including 37 deep-sea divers, are now in Liepaya and the search area.

Admiral Golovko, Chief of the Navy General Staff, who arrived in Liepaya by plane on April 22, is in charge of organizing on-site operations. Vice Admiral Andreyev, Commander of Navy Fleet 4, is in charge of operations.

Weather conditions in the diving operations area: Wind southeasterly, 3 to 4 points; sea chop 2 to 3 points; complete cloud cover; fog in some areas.

ATTACHMENT: Map, drawing No. 170 on 1 page, attached only to copy No. 1 and 2.

(signed)
YUMASHEV

22 April 1950

No. 1274858

[Handwritten] Certified: Lieutenant Colonel (signed)

CHIEF OF MAIN OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE OF NAVY GENERAL STAFF VICE ADMIRAL FOKIN *(signed)*

22 April 1950

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[TFR 446-6]

[Handwritten] Declassified
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Entry 202 of 5.10.93
Director of the Archive (signed)

~~Top Secret~~
Copy No. 3

To Comrade STALIN
To Comrade BULGANIN, N. A.

I would like to report the following:

On May 6 – 7, the following operations were conducted in the search area for the American airplane:

- Diving operations in the area of point No. 4; 25 dives were made to survey an area of about 52,000 square meters;

- 13 trawling vessels carried out trawling of the western part of the area. An area of about 0.92 square miles (3.15 square km) was trawled. The trawlers came into contact with underwater obstacles eight times. The points of contact were examined by divers who made a total of 20 dives;

- 16 ships equipped with metal detectors conducted a search in the eastern part of the area. An area of about 2.15 square miles (7.36 square km) was searched. Five contacts occurred and four dives were made.

In the area of point No. 4, divers found a piece of gray rubber, 15 x 40 cm, which smelled strongly of emalite or acetone. The rubber piece is presumably a part of the fuel tank lining.

During the night of May 4/5, fishermen retrieved a packet of rubberized tarpaulin in the sea, which was 26 x 82 cm and bore the letters "USN" (U.S. Navy). The find was made 15 miles west of Seranten village (32 km south of Vindava).

The following objects were found in the packet:

- Three take-apart duralumin paddles filled with cork;

- A plastic hand pump with a metal mount. The pump housing is damaged. It has a hole with irregular edges and many cracks;

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-Two rubberized webs, 92 x 117 cm;

-Rubberized camouflage and signal tent, 210 x 330 cm.

I believe this packet is part of the life-saving equipment that is standard on U.S. Navy airplanes.

The Commander of Navy Fleet 4 was given the order to deliver the packet immediately to Moscow by airplane.

ATTACHMENT: Schematic map 4176, drawing No. 196, attached only to copies 1 and 2.

(signed)
YUMASHEV
[Handwritten] Certified: (signed)

8 May 1950

No. 1274967

PROVISIONAL ACTING CHIEF OF THE MAIN OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE OF THE NAVY GENERAL STAFF

CAPTAIN 1ST RANK /YAKOVLEV/ (signed)

8 May 1950

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[TFR 446-8]

[Handwritten] –75 -

[Handwritten] Declassified
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Entry 202 of 5.10.93
Director of Archive (signed)

~~Top Secret~~
Copy No. 3

To Comrade BULGANIN, N.A.

I would like to report the following about operations that were conducted during the search for the American airplane as of May 9.

Diving operations were carried out in the area of point No. 4. A total of 22 dives have been made to search an area of about 44 thousand square meters.

24 ships carried out a search using metal detectors in the eastern and western parts of the area. An area of about 1.5 square miles (5.1 square km) was searched. Two contacts occurred.

No wreckage of the airplane has been located.

Since May 9, bottom trawling has been suspended because it is not efficient. The search for the airplane wreckage will continue with the use of the metal detectors and divers.

On May 9, a packet that was picked up in the sea by Vindava fishermen on the night of May 4/ 5 at a point 40 miles northeast of the search area (15 miles west of Sernaten village) was delivered from Liepaya to Moscow.

This packet is an accessory for a rubber lifeboat, which is standard equipment on U.S. Navy airplanes.

The packet (pouch) is made of rubberized fabric, yellow in color, and has a flap with two metal buttons. The packet size is 18 x 26 x 82 cm.

The bottom part of the package bears the inscription "USN," which indicates that it belongs to the U.S. Navy.

The face side of the package bears an inscription

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Entry 202 of 5.10.93

with the contents of the package: paddle, sail/tent, manual pump, stereo tube (binoculars), hammock (web), angle reflector, smoke signals, and marking ink.

The stereo tube, angle reflector, smoke signals, and marking ink were not in the packet.

Three take-apart paddles made of duralumin, hollow, dark-blue. Each paddle has a blade and a detachable stem. The total length of the paddle is 183 cm.

One side of the paddle blades is coated with a special paint (green-blue) that reflects a beam of light directed from the ship to facilitate a search of the lifeboat at sea.

A brief set of instructions attached to the paddle blades indicates how to position the paddle during nighttime search operations at sea.

Manual pump for pumping water from the boat. The pump housing is made of plastic. It has a cylindrical shape and a metal mount. A duralumin piston is installed in the housing and has a rod with a handle.

The pump housing size is: height 26 cm, diameter 9 cm, wall thickness 2 mm. The pump housing is damaged, probably as a result of impact with a hard object.

Two rubberized fabric tarpaulin webs of size 92 x 117 cm, which are of steel color on one side and gray on the opposite side. The borders of the web are reinforced with a layer of tarpaulin, turned under and stitched with coarse thread.

The webs are designed to serve as seats for oarsmen.

Sail/tent, 210 x 230 cm, made of rubberized silk, dark gray on one side and bright red on the other side.

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3. –

The sail/tent is likely to be used for camouflage or for attracting the attention of rescuers (depending on the outer color), or as a sail for the lifeboat.

One corner of the tent bears a brand name and the year of manufacture—1949.

The absence of the stereo tube, angle reflector, smoke signals, and marking ink in the packet may indicate that the fishermen might have opened the packet before it was delivered by the border guard detachment to the Commander of the Navy Fleet 4 in Liepaya.

Measures have been taken to find the objects missing from the packet.

The same plane delivered to Moscow a piece of rubber, 15 x 40 cm, that was found by divers on May 7 in the area of point No. 4. The gray piece of rubber, which smells strongly of gasoline, has freshly-burned edges and is most likely a part of the airplane's fuel tank.

It may be assumed that the packet with the lifeboat parts that was found in the sea was an accessory belonging to the airplane that we are searching for.

The burnt rubber piece found by the divers in the area of point No. 4 is undoubtedly a part of the fuel tank of the airplane we are searching for.

The Commander of Navy Fleet 4 has been ordered to intensify the search and to conduct diving operations in the area where the burned rubber piece was found.

(signed)
YUMASHEV
[Handwritten] Certified: (signed)

10 May 1950

No. 1274993

PROVISIONAL ACTING CHIEF, MAIN OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT, NAVY GENERAL STAFF CAPTAIN FIRST RANK [name is not visible on page]